HONORS ENGLISH 11/12 SYLLABUS

Location: WMU, Battle Creek Campus
Time: Thursdays 1:20-3:50pm
Instructor: Professor S. Marie LaFata-Clay
Contact: stephanie.m.clay@wmich.edu

Course Description
English 11/12 focuses on the continued development of advanced compositional skills in expository, argumentative, and creative writing. The goals of the class are to foster critical thinking and increasingly sophisticated reading skills, literary and rhetorical analysis, and to promote greater artistic self-awareness. Cooperative learning ventures including workshops, peer review, collaborative writing, presentations, public speaking, and extensive discussion comprise the heart of classroom activities. Over the year, students will compose approximately three typed one page essays per week and complete at least one additional longer writing assignment each week—including formal critical essays, creative writing, a research paper, and other projects and/or presentations. The readings include fiction, poetry, drama and nonfiction, and represent many different styles, time periods, and traditions. Readings include Shakespeare \textit{(Hamlet)}, Sophocles \textit{(Oedipus)}, Mary Shelley \textit{(Frankenstein)}, the Romantic poets, Emily Dickinson, Lewis Carroll, Mark Twain, Flannery O’Connor, William Faulkner, George Orwell, Kate Chopin, Ernest Hemingway, Edgar Allen Poe, Walt Whitman, Ray Bradbury, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Audre Lorde, N. Scott Momaday, Margaret Atwood, Pablo Neruda, Lucille Clifton, Maxine Hong Kingston, Wislawa Syzmborska, Yusef Komunyakaa, Tim O’Brien, Mark Haddon, Jincy Willett, Neil Gaiman, and others.

Required Texts and Materials:
- \textit{The Bedford Introduction to Literature} (ATYP will provide)
- Mary Shelley, \textit{Frankenstein} (1818 text)
- Art Spiegelman, \textit{Maus Vol. I}
- Margaret Atwood, \textit{Oryx and Crake}
- In-class writing journal for in-class writing and note-taking
- 3-ring binder to keep your portfolio organized
- Folder to keep homework organized

Course Objectives
- To critically analyze ideas and techniques used in a variety of written works
- To write critically, competently, and confidently about life and literature
- To develop an effective writing process that can be used across disciplines
- To evaluate written work for effectiveness
- To develop revision and rewriting skills
To contribute ideas, thoughts, and suggestions to group discussions
To function as a productive and helpful member of a writing community
To identify, appreciate, and practice wielding the power of the written word

**Tentative Schedule** (order and/or length of units subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th># of Weeks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1:</td>
<td>Summer Reading/Literary Essay</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 2:</td>
<td>Literary Criticism</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit 3:</td>
<td>Archetypes &amp; Intro to Drama</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 4:</td>
<td><em>Hamlet</em>, Pt. I (Lyrics Analysis)</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 5:</td>
<td><em>Hamlet</em>, Pt. 2 (Spoken Word)</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 6:</td>
<td>War &amp; Visual Rhetoric (<em>Maus</em>)</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 7:</td>
<td>Research Papers</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 8:</td>
<td>Romanticism / Gothic Lit</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 9:</td>
<td><em>Frankenstein</em></td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
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<td>Unit 10:</td>
<td>Dystopias (<em>Oryx and Crake</em>)</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
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**Policies and Requirements**

I refer you to the standard Rules and Responsibilities memo that was mailed to you. Please review “Avoiding Digital Distractions” and “Organizing for ATYP English.”

**Homework is due at the beginning of class.** Use proper header format: *Name, Week Number, Assignment in upper left/right corner, interesting title centered below.*

**Late work is not acceptable!** I will contact you and copy your parents (noooooo) when you miss work. I reserve the right to cap chronically late work at a check (i.e. chronically late work may not be eligible for a check-plus or a plus). I am more likely to be amenable to extensions or late work if you let me know beforehand that you may be unable turn work in on time.

**Turn in work via eLearning:** Please upload your papers to the proper Dropbox folder in eLearning each week. I will check this; it is an excellent habit and will help you avoid BIG CRISIS MOMENTS. Plus, if you forget to print your work yet turn it into Dropbox, your work will not be considered late! Bonus! **Schedule:** By 10pm Saturday, upload vocabulary. Then, upload half the homework (your choice) Monday evening and any remaining work by 10pm Tuesday. This will ensure that you stay on top of the homework, develop good time management skills, and avoid procrastination-based anxiety. **To be clear, except for vocab, you still need to bring physical copies to class each week to hand in to me.**

**Professionalism:** This is your willingness to participate in class activities, keep notes, help others, arrive on time, stow electronics, and contribute to the positive community of the class.

**Electronics Policy:** Cell phones and laptops are, for better or worse, part of our modern lives. **You are allowed to use your cell phone and laptop in class for**
taking notes, pulling up readings, researching discussion questions, and looking up author info. Any other uses, poof, it has to disappear.

**Student Expectations**
- Thoughtful, thorough, and timely completion of all assignments
- Close, careful reading of all the material
- Energetic participation and respectful attentiveness during class
- Conduct in keeping with university surroundings
- Articulation of ideas, beliefs, and opinions AND respect for those of others
- Communication! If something is affecting your class performance, please let me know and we can work on it together.

**Course Expectations**
ATYP is basically the best thing. The expectations are greater, and so are the rewards. I will not assign busywork—classes and assignments are carefully planned and consistent with the course objectives. I will provide written comments on your essays and require revisions. **You can expect roughly 6-8 hours of homework each week.** You must manage your time wisely when it comes to completing ATYP assignments. It is easy to tell which assignments have been completed at the last minute. Falling behind and then catching up is both very difficult and stressful. It is my hope that you find the homework challenging, instructive, engaging, and fun.

**Assignments** (There will be a lot of them, of many different kinds!)

**Weekly Writings:** A 2-4 page paper or creative exercise will be assigned each week. These will be graded on the check system, explained below. These assignments will be typed, **1.5 spaced**, 12 pt Times Roman font with 1” margins, and reflect roughly 2-4 hours of work.

**Journals:** 2-3 journals will be assigned each week. Some will be more directed and others free or creative. Each should reflect at least 30-45 minutes of work, at least 1 page in length, **single-spaced**, usual format, etc. Label each and keep ‘em organized. Journals are for experimenting and thinking out loud; I encourage you to take risks and try out ideas.

**Essays:** At the conclusion of each unit, you will hand in a formal essay related to the topic. The essays will be longer (~4-6 pages) and more polished than the weekly writings. You will peer edit/workshop these essays and revise them. These essays will receive a letter grade and written comments. Essays must be typed, **double-spaced**, 12 pt TNR, 1” margins. Depending on the nature of the essay, plan on 4-7 hours of work.

**Vocabulary:** Each week I’ll assign 3-4 literary terms from the provided list. You will come up with a definition **you understand** and an example of it pulled from that week’s readings. Title each list properly (i.e. Vocab for Week #2). **Vocabulary will only**
receive a √ (complete) or a √- (incomplete). We’ll have lit term quizzes every month or so to keep us sharp.

**Notebooks:** I will occasionally collect your note-taking notebooks to grade and see how you are actively engaging with our texts and your assignments. This may be a surprise!

**Portfolio:** All assignments, drafts, and revisions will eventually be collected and turned in as a portfolio. I will collect portfolios each semester and at key points along the way.

**Grading/Written Comments:** You can expect me to comment on nearly all of your written work. This will include praise as well as critique; I want to give you a clear idea of what and how you should revise. **All work that does not receive a √+ must be revised for the portfolio checks & finals.** **PRIMARY CAVEAT:** Occasionally, assignments of my choosing will not get comments, only a grade. It will be your special challenge to thoroughly read my comments on your other work and make (extremely) educated guesses about what needs improving. This is an important part of developing your own writing process!

**General Grading Scale:**

- ✓− = You missed the mark. Potential issues include not answering the prompt or accepting its premise; no/not enough text examples; obvious lack of effort; length.
- ✓ = Solid work. You nailed the analysis but had a mediocre execution, or had fabulous writing and weak analysis, or did pretty good on both. You’re on the right track.
- ✓+ = Great work! You had a strong concept, pursued it with examples, and executed it well. Maybe a weak spot or two, nothing distracting. Tell your parents to buy you ice cream.
- + = Boom. Killer work: fully unique/interesting analysis, strong prose, intertextual analysis, etc. See also: exceedingly rare.

**Grade Calculation:** Essays (50%) Weekly writings (15%) Journals (15%) Participation and Professionalism (20%) (Please consider this very rough math!)

**Obligatory Pep Talk**

This all probably sounds like a lot of work. It is! But I can promise you too that we are going to have fun and ridiculousness in here too as we work hard and dig into some pretty heavy literature. There is so much to explore, uncover, analyze, criticize, poke holes, and be inspired by in the world of literature, and my hope this year is that you realize just how much literature has to offer. Ask questions, try out some strange ideas, take risks, and push yourself. I think we’re gonna have a great time. Let’s do this.

**A Word or Two of Wisdom**

The great Italian author Italo Calvino says, “**A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say.**” I think we will discover the truth of this together!